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can be accepted or rejected by the reader at his discretion.

To all readers it is important to know if the book contain later material than a book of a year ago, or if it treat the subject more thoroughly than some other book; if it is more practical, or mathematical, or statistical, or theoretical; whether it is a book written for reference only, or as a text-book.

Another important part of the review is the estimate as to the value of the Index. Engineering books, you know, are not bought with the intention of being read and thrown aside; they are bought principally for use as reference, and every book should be thoroughly and comprehensively indexed. Where a book is not so indexed, it is imperfect and incomplete, and as to this point the reviewer may do the reader a great good.

The feature of illustration is also open to considerable criticism, as there is too much carelessness exhibited in the preparation of illustrations for technical books.

This ideal review is an outline for the book of real worth, but for worthless or harmful books the best review is silence, and for books of mediocre value a few general statements of contents.

The PRESIDENT: It seems to me a courtesy we owe to our speakers to be quiet before taking up the next number, although I am sure that the subject does not require such extreme concentration of thought probably as some other subjects that might appear upon the program at this time. We are to take up next the recreation symposium, which is in charge of Mr. Samuel H. Ranck of the Grand Rapids public library, who, I presume, combines the two qualities of the strenuous librarian with the adept at recreation. I therefore turn over the program to Mr. Ranck.

RECREATION SYMPOSIUM

Mr. RANCK was the first speaker on the symposium program, his paper being entitled:

Recreation for Librarians

The announcement of this subject seems to have stirred up a variety of emotions in different people. Some have regarded it as juvenile for a learned and dignified organization to devote any of its time to the consideration of recreation—thought of only as a frivolous subject. Others regard it as a new evidence that librarians take themselves altogether too seriously when they think that their occupation needs to be offset by any special kind of recreation; and still others believe that it is a subject of the very greatest importance to each of us personally, and indirectly to the institutions and the public we serve.

Whatever be our views regarding the form of recreation for ourselves, everyone must admit that it is the business—the bounden duty—of every man and woman to keep fit for their daily work. The man or woman who deliberately regulates his or her life so that he does not keep fit is untrue to himself and untrue to society, and falsehood in this direction is akin to crime. A writer in the May "Fortnightly review," in discussing Physical energy in modern affairs, speaks of Mr. Roosevelt as the "Moses of the eleventh commandment," and that that Commandment is "Keep fit."

To keep fit, I believe, it is the first business of every one to endeavor to know his own fatigue curve, and then to regulate his life accordingly. This curve is, of course, different in different people, and, therefore, much of the strain of modern life comes from conventionalism and institutionalism, thereby forcing many into a routine of life which is the hardest to bear. Every one for his best normal life needs many forms of expression, and, therefore, a change from one form to another—a change of work—is very generally a rest.

Whether librarians need recreation more than others, or whether their work is harder than that of others, I do not propose to discuss. I merely say it is a fact, which might well be regarded as a scandal, that too many librarians, many of them not yet of the age of two score

and ten, have been breaking down—forced to retire from the work. Recalling those who have failed, in the last five or six years, to stand up under the burden of the work, I find it is not difficult to make a list of about 50 names. And there are many others, I am sure. Some of these have died before their time, others have been obliged to retire from library work permanently, and others temporarily, either on extended leaves of absence or to the friendly sanatorium. Whether this condition of affairs is worse among librarians than among other professional people I do not know, but when every year a considerable number of our fellow-workers are breaking down, it is time for us to give the matter some consideration.

The causes of these breakdowns are, I know, very frequently outside of the library. Who cannot recall the conscientious librarian carrying in addition to his—perhaps more frequently her—regular work, the burden of nursing a sick member of the family, running a large Sunday school class, a missionary society, or some other form of religious or philanthropic endeavor? Then, too, there may be social dissipations which are responsible for extra wear and tear of nerves—dances, parties, etc.—extending too far into the hours required for sleep. Many have the strength to do these extra things, and interest in outside affairs is most valuable for the library work, but at the same time the library has a right to insist that they shall not be at the expense of the energy needed to keep fit.

In planning the program for this symposium, the effort has been to get the personal experiences of a number of people as to the value of specific forms of recreation, and therefore the ego is to be put forward without reserve and without apology.

Accordingly I shall start off by stating my own creed, or, if you please, my philosophy of life and work. If you prefer to call it religion, do so. I believe that one's attitude of mind toward his work is a most important element in whether he finds it easy or hard; in other words, joy in the

work lessens the burden of it. This brings into our exercises for recreation the element of purpose. For example, a walk with a dinner at the other end is better as exercise—recreation—than the walk to no purpose. The latter is like fanning the air.

During the last 20 years I have worked on an average of from 60 to 75 hours a week; not all at library work at any time, and it has been the exception to find the work I was doing a burden. Of course, I have been exceptionally fortunate in being to a large extent master of my own time; that is, when I did not feel like doing one thing I could nearly always turn to something else, without following a pre-arranged or fixed schedule. This, of course, I know is impossible for every one in the routine of a large institution, but I believe that it helps immensely in the ease with which a given quantity of work may be accomplished. Freedom in this direction helps enormously to keep oneself fit.

In keeping fit there are two elements which to me have always been of the greatest importance—eating and sleeping. A sufficient quantity of wholesome food is absolutely essential for every one to get the maximum of energy and efficiency out of himself. In order to get the best out of his food, it is necessary to keep the nervous system in first-class condition; for any unusual nervous strain may affect directly the ability to assimilate properly an adequate supply of food. I believe that the beginning of the disorganization of the nervous system among librarians is frequently due to eye-strain. I have seen many examples of this where nervous indigestion, leading up to nervous prostration, and all the ills that follow, began with eye-strain. Library work and library lighting can easily make all of us victims of eye-strain; and I may add that the lighting in many of our libraries is vicious.

Mr. Ranck then announced that Dr. Victor C. Vaughan, of the University of Michigan, was to have presented a paper on "Recreation," but in the absence of Dr.

Vaughan, his paper was summarized by Mr. John Cotton Dana.

Five-minute talks by librarians who extolled the virtues of their favorite recreation were given by: Miss Gratia A. Countryman on "Sleeping out of doors"; Miss Alta L. Stansbury, "Walking"; Charles R. Dudley, "Watching the game"; Hiller C. Wellman, "Tennis"; Miss Elfrida Everhart, "Baseball"; Henry J. Carr, "Automobiling"; Lawrence J. Burpee, "Riding a hobby"; Clement W. Andrews, "Golf"; Reuben Gold Thwaites, "Canoeing"; Purd B. Wright, "Horseback riding"; Miss Agnes Van Valkenburgh, "Bird study"; Arthur E. Bostwick, "In-door exercise." William Warner Bishop discussed the "Sabbatical year for librarians."

At the close of the Recreation symposium President Hodges assumed the chair and adjourned the meeting until the evening.

On Tuesday evening, July 5th, an illustrated lecture on Play and social welfare was given by Graham Romeyn Taylor, of Chicago, Associate editor of "The Survey."

PLAY AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Among all the movements for social advance which have come to the fore during the last two decades, none has had a more rapid and extensive development than that to provide play and recreative facilities for the children in our cities. The last four years have witnessed the most extraordinary growth of all. In 1907 there were 90 cities which maintained playgrounds for children; in 1908 the number rose to 185, and by the end of 1909 there were 336.

This recent widespread activity has been due primarily to a new appreciation of the value of play as a positive force whose benefit should be made available for all children, rather than as an ameliorative effort to make life a little more endurable and normal for the children in crowded city centers. It was, of course, natural that playgrounds should start where city conditions were seen to bear down the hardest upon child life; the

first one in this country was established in Boston a little more than 20 years ago, and the movement soon spread to New York, Chicago, and other large cities. The more extensive adoption of the playground idea, however, by communities of every sort has come in response to the recognition of the new idea that wholesome play is not merely a preventive of ill health and delinquency among city children, but that it is an essential in the process by which all children grow up—a promoter of good health, good character, and the spirit of co-operation and team play which is so necessary in the civic life of to-day.

Interesting instances of the development of play facilities in small communities are to be found in Missouri and Massachusetts. In the former state, under the auspices of the State University, a "play drummer" recently visited about 30 of the smaller cities, 12 of which started playgrounds. In Massachusetts a state law has been in effect for two years, under which referendum votes are held in cities or towns of over 10,000 population on the question whether playgrounds shall be established. Such votes in over 30 cities have, with two exceptions, resulted in an overwhelming majority in favor of playgrounds. Even in rural communities the play spirit has begun to manifest itself in such occasions as "a field day and play picnic for country children," which is now held annually in Ulster county, New York, the leadership coming from a state normal school. The whole countryside, young and old, rallies for one festal day which has far-reaching influence in stimulating neighborly relations and a community spirit.

The play spirit, in the opinion of those who attended the recent Play Congress at Rochester, should extend far beyond the playground or special occasion, and should permeate our whole life. It was even proposed that we should now supplement playgrounds by making definite provision for recreation along many residential streets on which traffic is not frequent.

Play for children, in fact, is now seen to be only part of a far larger movement